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THE MARINES
And Other War Verse

· ADOLPHE E. SMYLIE ·

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THE MARINES

AND OTHER WAR VERSE

BY

ADOLPHE E. SMYLIE

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To

E. C. S.

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THE MARINES

THE MARINES

"PARDON! he has no Engleesh, heem,
Il ne parle que français;
I spik it leetle some, monsieur,
Vaire bad, j'en suis fâché—
Marines? Mais oui! I fight wiz zem
At Château Thierry
An' on ze Ourcq an' Marne in grande
Bonne camaraderie.
I see zem fight at Bois Belleau,
Like sauvage make ze yell,—
Sacré nom de Dieu! zoze sailor man
Eez fightin' like ze hell!
All time zey smile when make ze push,
Magnifique zaire élan,
Zey show ze heart of lion
For delight our brav Franchman.
An' in ze tranch at rest, zoze troop
From ze États Unis
Queeck make ze good frien' of poilu
Wiz beeg slap on ze knee!
Zey make ze song an' joke, si drôle,
An' pass ze cigarette;

Zey call us goddam good ol' scout
Like Marquis La Fayette.
Next day, mebbee, again ze taps,—
Ze volley in ze air;—
Adieu! some fightin' sailor man
Eez gone West. C'est la guerre!
No more ze smile, ze hug, ze hand
Queeck wiz ze cigarette;
C'est vrai, at funerall of *heem*
Ze poilu's eye eez wet.
But, every day like tidal wave,—
Like human avalanche,—
Ze transport bring more Yankee troop,
To get ze beeg revanche!
Zen from ze heart Américain
Come milliards of monnaie;
Eet eez ze end! Your countree bring
Triomphante liberté.
So, au revoir! I mus' go on,
But first I tell to yo'
What some high Officier remark
Zat day at Bois Belleau:
He say, our great Napoleon
Wiz envy would turn green
Eef he could see zoze sailor man,—
Zoze Oncle Sam Marines!"

HOROO!

THE stretcher-bearers had just brought them in;
It looked like a message to "next of kin"
For Private O'Leary and Private O'Flynn,—
But the Surgeon said
"They'll be all right!

These Irish are tougher than Billy-be-damned,
For they can be everlastingly lammed,
Shot up or cut up or blown up or rammed
And they're back again soon
For more fight!"

Moaned O'Leary, "Mike, man, how do you feel?
I'm mashed to a jelly, me head's in a reel,—
'Twas beautiful though whin we stuck 'em wid stheel,
But I missed a sthroke
Seein' you fall."

Groaned Mike, "Ivery bone in me body is
broke,
A squad o' thim Fritzies all gave me a soak;
'Twas a hell ov a fight! Sure that's no joke,
But—it's betther than
No fight at all!"

ON HIS OWN

"You see that young kid lying there
Playing a game of solitaire?
All shot to pieces in the air;
By Heck, Sarge, he's a wonder.
The gamest lad I ever met;
They're probing him for bullets yet,
But s—sh! here comes his nurse Yvette,—
Kept *him* from going under.

"You think she's passing by him? Nit!
D'you get that smile? He waves his mitt;
I think he's stuck on her a bit,
Can't blame him for that matter.
She watches him just like a hawk,
Now listen to their daily talk,
She's all Paree, he's all New York;
Sit quiet, hear their chatter."

"Pardonnez-moi, désirez-vous—"
"Oh, fine and dandy! How are you?"
"Quelque chose? Comprenez-vous?—"

"Ah, now I know you're kiddin'."
"Vous avez bonne mine aujourd'hui—"
"It's high time you were nice to me."
"Time? Je comprends, il est midi—"
"Bright eyes, I think I'm skiddin'."

"Je crois que je vous donnerai—"
"I'll back up anything you say—"
"Un petit morceau de poulet—"
"You fascinating creature!"
"Avec la crême, dans la coquille,—"
"Rats! There she goes! I always feel
Some blessy's S. O. S. appeal
Will call off my French teacher."

"The Sarge here nudged my splintered ribs:
'Well, I'll be damned! Here comes His
Nibs.'
And down the aisle stalked General Gibbs
With all the famous aces.
They formed around the sick boy's bed,
He gasped, saluted, then turned red:
'Looks like I'm pinched!' was all he said,
Scanning their smiling faces.

"'So,' spoke the General, 'you alone
Brought down three Taubes on your own!
Another Yankee Ace is known

To everyone in Blighty.
I'm proud to know you,—put it there,—
And now we're going to let you wear
This gallantly won *Croix de Guerre*
I'm pinning on your nighty.' "

EYES FOR THE ARMY

Everyone who owns a field-glass is asked to forward it to Franklin Roosevelt, Naval Observatory, Washington, D. C.—*Exchange*, April, 1918.

FAREWELL my old binoculars
Snug in your well-worn case,
Aye! since the days of Jerome Park
We've seldom missed a race.
Gone now the days when you and I
Would watch our "one best bet"
Get left flat-footed at the post,—
I see them running yet!
You've seen my patrimony fade
And my stiff upper lip
Grow tremulous from dalliance with
The sure diurnal tip.
Mayhap this parting with our "lamps"
May bring surcease to some
Whose coin like mine is near the
Irreducible minimum.
Without you now, the racing game

Looks drab and drear and dark;
Vale! Jamaica, Aqueduct,
And eke fair Belmont Park!
For now I've sent you,—Lord knows where,—
Because I know I should;
Could I but share your adventure,—
I wish to Heaven I could
But adolescence; golden youth;
The fires of yesteryear;—
Gone glimmering with the auld lang syne,
That's why I must stay here.
Atone then for our empty days,
Our futile hours of ease
And take this message with you
To our comrades overseas:
Stand fast, you war-worn allies, with
Your "backs against the wall,"
Can't you hear the tramp of millions?
We've heard your bugle call.
The Almighty may forgive us
For our apathetic start,
But now America sees red,—
Fear not! She'll do her part.
We'll send our blood and treasure for
The death grip just begun
To rid the world of hellish spawn,—
The execrated Hun.

On guard, then, with your lenses bright
And furnish "eyes" to see
The last swath of spiked helmets mowed
In shell-torn Picardy.

WITH STOP-GAP CAREY

"THEY wus mostly cooks an' teamsters
As made up our misfit crew
That followed Stop-Gap Carey,—
But not a Boche got through.
That stand promoted Carey
From the ranks o' Brigadiers
An' that's where I met that daffy bunch
O' Yankee Engineers.
A 'andful o' those bridge men
'Ummin' some old college song
Wuz a fixin' up a causeway
When our pick-ups rushed along.
They sensed wot wuz a-doin'—
Their Lieutenant yelled: 'Hey, Bo!
If you'll let us in the picture
We'll kick in this movie show.
Can you swap some guns for shovels?
Never mind! Fall in there, boys!
Grab those crowbars and short canthooks,
Let's join in with the big noise!'

"I wuz near that young Lieutenant
When the Fritzies tried our trench,
'E'd used up 'is automatic
An' 'e swung a Stillson wrench.
No baynit seemed to reach 'im
As 'e smashed on through the line,
An' 'is mates with picks an' shovels
Wuz a-backin' of 'im fine.
'E wuz champion, that 'e wuz,
A bonnie sight to see,
An' 'e kept chantin' '*Here's* your jam
And *there's* your dish o' tea!'

"'E said to me next mornin',
'Lloyd George, I like your map!
You're all A1 merino
And a yard wide in a scrap!
Come spend a week-end with us
If you like Westphalia ham,—
At our shooting-box for schweinhunds
Called Sans Souci near Potsdam.'
With that, they went back to their job,
Their laughter in the breeze,—
But oo can understand *their* talk?
It's worse than Senegalese."

OVERHEARD IN A HANGAR

I LIKE my job, to hang around
And tune up motors on the ground—
Give 'em that smooth old purring sound
And start them off a-screeching.
The job has done me good, I think,
Leastwise, my *doubts* are on the blink—
I'm getting pretty near the brink
Where I'll believe in preaching.

Take young Jim's case. He flew, back home,
Then came here, where they cut his comb;
He comes from Watertown or Rome,
Some place near the big river.
Got all shot up as you lads know
Then volplaned forty miles or so
Unconscious! Now that bunk won't go
About a "wise old flivver."

I saw him come at ten o'clock
A full-speed nose-dive, like a rock,
But landed sweet, no jar or shock—

You get that, mechanicians!
He says he fainted past their line,
His watch exactly half-past nine—
Now who brought home this pal o' mine?
Well, I have *my* suspicions.

Don't hand me that subconscious stuff;
I'm not religious, half enough;
But you can note this on your cuff:
It is a Higher Power
Than gasoline that drives a plane
And brings limp airmen home again
Through fog and sleet and hurricane
A hundred miles an hour!

I know God makes his presence felt
To birdmen up in the moon-belt,
Or Jim would be dead as a smelt!
And now, that tough young geezer
Admits he always seemed to feel
Some Spirit hand was on his wheel;
If that kid doesn't learn to kneel
I'll bang him on the beezer.

HIS STAR

We laughed when little Bill said "Dad,
I'm going to the war!"
But that's *his* star a-waving
On the flag outside our door.
It didn't seem conceivable
That such a puny lad
Could get into the Army,—
But it shows the spunk he had.
Yes, Bill was a persistent,
Bull-headed little cuss,
Though when the doctors turned him down
He didn't make a fuss,
Just said: "Me for the country, Dad,
I'll come back fine as silk;
I'll eat my weight in potcheese
And I'll swim in cream and milk."
That night he came and told me
Just before he went to bed,
As near as he remembered,
What the Army doctors said:

"They listened through a stethoscope
To get some inside news
And something in my heart told me
That I was going to lose.
They didn't mention leprosy,
I'm glad I haven't *that*,
But I've got everything else, Dad,
To put me on the mat.
I'm underweight and undersized;
They say I have flat feet;
I'm short a few bicuspids
Used for fletcherizing meat.
My right lung is as good as new,
The other one's a wreck,
But though the left one is not right
The right one's left, by Heck!
Then, infantile paralysis
They say I've barely missed,
But spinal meningitis may
Soon put me on the list.
My optic nerves do not project
Clear pictures to my brain;
My pericardium shows that
I'm suffering from ptomaine.
Then somewhere in my system
There's a floating kidney loose
And there's too much saly-something

In my pancreatic juice.
They hinted at sarcoma
Of the epithelium;
I don't know what it is but you'll
Admit that's going some!
My respiration is too short;
My tonsils are too long;
My whole metabolism is
Abso*dam*lutely wrong!
But why should a corpse worry?
I don't care now, what they said—
Their autopsy distinctly shows
I've been a long time dead!"

Bill left next day for the old farm
Owned by his doting aunts,—
We haven't seen him since, although
He wrote to us from France.
We laughed when little Bill said, "Dad,
I'm going to the war!"
But that's *his* star a-waving
On the flag outside our door.
Yes, Bill was a persistent,
Bull-headed little cuss,—
He writes he's now chief deck-hand
On an eight-ton Army bus.

TIFFIN TALK

"HERE's a stray Tommy! Hey there! Arf a mo'!
Come chow with our bunch o' Marines!
Cast your lamps on this pile o' doughnuts;
Take a slant at these Boston beans!
Sure, throw out your clutch, that's the idea,
Slack off your bellyband. Eat!
But, if you're too tender for splinters,
Grab a sandbag or two for a seat.
What's new? Is All Highest complaining
That the Allies are getting too rough?
We've got a hunch in this Corps, old top,
That Jerry has near had enough!
What's the dope in the London papers,
Do they think we've got Fritz on the run—
Or, do they in spite of our land-grabs,
Say our troubles have only begun?"

"Th' last news is what Conan Doyle says
In the *Standard*, as I 'ave just read,—
'E says Berlin shall be occupied
By invadin' their country, 'e said;

An' when we all sits at the tible
To decide what to do with th' 'Un,
'Twill be th' sime blinkin' tible
In Potsdam, where war wuz begun.
'E says th' blighters 'as notions
That they're sife on th' Rhine an' Moselle,—
'E looks for sudden collapse, an' then—
We'll drive th' pigs 'ome sure as 'ell!"

"Attaboy! That's the stuff, Tommy!
Conan Doyle's got the high-sign all right;
I like to blurt out *my* convictions
And I tell you surrender's in sight!
Meanwhile just wetnurse that motto
That goes with our crackerjack tanks,—
'Treat 'em rough!' the rougher the better,
And that goes with two million Yanks.
Remember the *Lusitania*,
And pray for the order to-night,—
'No quarter from now for the Heinies,
Fifty-fifty on Schrecklichkeit!'
Then for a brick-wall atonement
From Bill and his degenerates,—
After giving them torch, sack, and pillage,—
That's the verdict of me and my mates!"

THE FOREIGN LEGION

HATS off to the Foreign Legion!
Your health, Sergeant Michael McWhite!
We picked your name out at random,
As a rhyme co-efficient for "fight."
The papers tell us you are Irish,
A popular race in New York,
Where we have more sons of old Ireland
Than there are in your County of Cork!
We have a sneaking affection, Mike,
For you and your prototype Pat,
Whose coat tails we prefer to sidestep
When it comes to the drop of the hat.
We know your Serbian record, Sarge,
And have followed you up ever since,
By the stains on your musket and sabre,—
Your bloody, tell-tale finger prints!
Death scoffers, with lives on your coat sleeves,
Dedicated to beloved France;
The same sangfroid in your devil-may-care
Ancient order of thrilling romance!

All hail to the bold Foreign Legion,
  Their home any casual trench,
With their English, Irish, Egyptians,
  Moroccans, Poles, Belgians, French;
Americans too,—some immortal
  In the death that the Légionnaire seeks,—
Brave Rockwell and Seeger, the poet,
  And Whitmore and Kelly and Weeks!
Thrice welcome, scarred men of the Legion,
  Who honor our country to-day;
America reveres the uniform
  Of the Légion d'Honneur fourrager!

A DUGOUT SYMPOSIUM

"Wi' ye haud yer tongue, Jock MacGreegor?
Dinna cheep us anither wurd;
Hoots! gie thon obleegin' Frenchmon
A chanst fur his song tae be hurd.
Ye're liker a wean nor a sojer,
Fur yinst haud yer gab onyways,—
Ye sudna mak' mock, nae doot lad
He'll be singin' th' *Marsylaise!*
Toots, havers! guan wi' yer singin',
Dinna fash yersel' mon, sing awa',
Furbye there's naught tae be feart aboot,
We're auld fechtin' freens one an' a'!"

"Merci, vous êtes très aimable;
Je veux vitement obliger
Mais je chante toujours ce ravissant
Overzaire: C'est une peche; écoutez!
Oui, là-bas! Oui, là-bas!
Chantons-le, chantons-le, oui, là-bas!
Que les Yanks arrivent, que les Yanks arrivent,

Les tambours battent un rataplan!
Alors, Boche! Garde à toi!
Chantons-le, chantons-le, garde à toi!
Nous arrivons—nous sommes en route,
Nous ne lâcherons pas, nous tiendrons jusqu'au bout!"

"Scaramouch! da leetla Franchman
He carry da frog in da throat!
Ah, Milano! mia La Scala!
Dees Franchman he getta ma goat!
Nobody singa da moosic
Like da greata tenori Caruse!
Rigoletto! I cry, I go crazy,
I maka da monk' an' da goose!"

"Garn with yer blinkin' haspersions!
Caruse! Oo th' 'ell is 'e?
No doubt some fat organ-grinder
From a dump down in Italy.
Cheero, there, Frenchie! ye're rippin'!
Though I don't know a damn word ye said,
But I 'eard that played back in Lunnon
With th' Stars an' Stripes over'ead!
Gar blimey, that tune puts th' punch in
Th' 'ole bally batterin'-ram;

That's th' marchin' song o' th' Yankees
An' ye'll 'ear it soon in Potsdam.
That singin' bunch is a fightin' bunch,—
Yer can't 'old 'em back o' th' tanks,—
They're top-'ole troops; we're bloomin' proud
To brigade with th' 'ard-'ittin' Yanks!"

A LETTER FROM THE FRONT

"I've studied hard since last I wrote
For I haven't much else to do,
Since I muffed that inshoot hand-grenade,
But brush up my parleyvoo.
So I wrestle verbs while loafing, Dan,
On my first-base-hospital cot,—
'Je parle, tu parle, il (or elle) parle,'—
Sounds kind o' highbrow, eh what!
Wait 'til I spill this at Luna Park,—
'Combien ces saucissons ci?'
They'll never know I'm asking what
The price of hot dogs might be!
The table d'hôte talk is quite easy,
Not half as hard as it seems,
Though I'll never get wise in nickels
To quatre-vingt-dix-huit centimes!
However, I'll get so Frenchified
I'll scare folks when I get home,—
A bonehead turned philologist
With a bulging Gallicized dome!
'The nut!' I can hear you saying,
'What's started him on this hunch?

Near-English was always good enough
For him and his pinochle bunch!'
So I might as well 'fess up, old son,
I've had sinking spells of late;
I'm rubbing the Katies and Maggies
And Honorias off my slate!
A slip of a girl here, started me
At frisking the French grammaire,—
One who could take *me* captive
With a strand of her dusky hair;
An orphan maid who teaches us French
And what it means to be brave,—
Not a man left of her kith and kin,
Each one in a soldier's grave.
Bless God, when I hear that Black Jack
Is unter den linden tree
I'll know that this oblate spheroid
Is safe for democracy;
Then back to the dear old U. S. A.,
But first I will tell Yvonne
That I know a bank up in Harlem
Where I have cachéd some mon,
And if she will flicker an eyelash
That I can interpret as 'Oui,'
I'll transplant my Picardy flower,—
That's what we'd call 'fait accompli!'"

A BIT OF BLUEST HEAVEN

"T ake a chair, old comrade,—
pull up and toast your feet;
H aven't had *mine* warm before
since Forty-Second Street.
E ver see a place like this?
it's true what they all say,—
Y ou'll find anointed ones of God
at the Y. M. C. A.
M any of our soldier wrecks
have crawled here half insane,—
C are and tender mothering
put life in them again.
A lways, in the hearts and minds
of all Humanity
R ed triangles will symbolize
a Christlike charity,
E xplaining more to me than all
the Saints and Prophets wrote;
D ash it all! it sure gives me
a big lump in my throat.

T hrough war's saturnalia
God's flag has been unfurled
R ight here! where boundless pity
brings redemption to the World.
I t's a 'little bit of all right'
here in your easy chair
A nd these cheery foster-Mothers
grudge none their zealous care;
N ever tiring, unfaltering
though Inferno flares the sky,
G iving melting sympathy
that almost makes you cry.
L ord of love! I'll tell you what
the Y HUT is to me,—
E arth's bit of bluest Heaven
in this Hell of butchery."

THE RED CROSS ROLL CALL

"THROW up your hands! all of you!
No, it's not burglary,—
We only want to count you in
The Red Cross drive, you see.
It's their Christmas roll call
So, each Mother's son of you
Sign up! of course we also mean
Each Mother's daughter, too.
Just fancy what that blessed band
Has done in la belle France!
Put down your names for Mercy's sake;
Be thankful for the chance.
Just a few weeks back it seemed
A figment of the brain,—
But here's a joyous Christmas come
With 'peace on earth' again!
No more to scan those cabled lists,
Dread casualty notes,
With fear that we would find his name
Clutching our hearts and throats!
Cheero! let's get together;

Can we put you on the list?
The amount is insignificant
And never will be missed.
Think of your priceless birthright
And the golden days to come,—
Join! and thank God you can say
'Americanus sum!' "

THE FOURTH IN PARIS

New York *Herald*, Sunday, Aug. 18, 1918.

"YOU'RE right, Mate, that was some parade
On Independence Day,
Down Président Wilson Avenue,
Out Strasbourg Monument way,
When our blood-baptized youngsters
Went marching through Paree,
Back from those gun-nests, Bois Belleau
And Château Thierry.
Yes, we were the Exhibit A,
The 'Teufel Hunden' Corps,
And that town sure went bughouse
As it never did before.
Remember how we all were bombed
From both sides of the street
By those bewitching French girls
Throwing flowers at our feet?
And after all my dodging
And ducking shrapnel shells
I got hit plumb on the bugle

With a bunch of immortelles!
Leastwise, that's what I call them—
Their fragrance haunts me yet;
I've pinned them near my wishbone
For a good-luck amulet.
Sure, I've got them! right here, Mate,
Inside my flannel shirt—
The first thing ever sent to me
By any living skirt!
I saw her when she threw them—
Threw me a shy kiss, too—
I see her starry eyes right now
In this slumgullion stew.
It's natural for them to flirt,
Come opportunity,
But I marched with some classy kids,
Why pick a hick like me?
I must be fascinating
Like the cobra, I'm afraid,
For I have got the ugliest map
Le bon Dieu ever made!
I hope the One Omnipotent
Will change the human race—
A man's no right to have a heart
With an ingrowing face!
To me last Independence Day
Was just a screen parade,

Dissolving in a 'close-up'
Of my inconnue maid.
I wonder if she'll ever know—
That dainty, mocking lass—
The hell she raised with your old pal,
A sentimental ass!"

A WAYSIDE IN FRANCE

New York *Herald*, Sunday, September 1, 1918.

"COME shake hands, my little peach blossom;
That's right, dear, climb up on my knee.
This big Yankee soldier is lonesome—
Ah, now we'll be friends, ma chérie.
We won't understand one another,
Your round eyes are telling me so,
But the cling of your chubby fingers
Is a language that all daddies know.
When I caught a sight of your pigtails
And those eyes of violet blue,
It made me heart-hungry, ma petite,
For I've a wee girl just like you.
She lives 'way across the wide ocean,
Out where the bald eagles nest,
And she knows all the chipmunks and gophers
At my shack out in the West."

"Tu dis l'ouest! Est-ce ton pays?
Veux-tu, quand tu iras chez-toi—

Maman est toujours à pleurer—
Me retrouver mon soldat Papa?
Il etait avec sa batterie
Pres des Anglais là, en campagne,
Mais Papa est allé dans l'ouest,
Des Anglais disaient à Maman.
Alors, Maman sera heureuse
Et, tu vois elle ne pleurera plus;
Je veux te donner un baiser,—
Merci! Tu es si bon pour nous!"

"There she goes! She told me her secret,
Kissed me and then flew away,—
Say, Poilu! you savez some English,
Now what did that little tot say?"

"She say Engleeshman tol' her Mama
Zat her soldat Papa eez gone West!
You said West, bien! zen you live zaire,
So she make you her leetle request,
Zat you find heem in your countree
So her Mama no more she weel cry;
Zen she thank you an' kees you, si joyeuse,—
Pauvre mignonne, she think you weel try!"

MACARTHUR OF THE GORDONS

New York *Herald*, Wednesday, October 30, 1918.

"Hey, Sergeant, I just met a Kiltie—
By Gee! they grow bigger than whales—
This one six-five in his holeproofs
And he'd bust any Fairbanks scales!
He left footprints in the roadway
Like a big he-elephant's spoor
And the heather that grew on his knee joints
Would stuff a fair sized ostermoor.
He'd a hand like a bunch o' bananas,
As red as his scrawny wrist
And when I shook hands with him later
He cracked every bone in my fist!
I saw the braw Hielander coming,—
Bonnet and plaids and a' that,
And I thought I'd flag wee MacGreegor
For a smoke and a bit of a chat.
So I called, 'Whoa there, Caledonia!
Back pedal, let's chin for a spell;
I'm Private McGrath, of the Rainbows;
What's your name, little lady from hell?'

I certainly felt like a sawed-off
Looking up at that haggis-fed,
Who proved to be Arthur MacArthur,
Of the Gordons, I think he said.
I couldn't dope his dialect Sarge,
But just write this down in your book—
If he ever goes into vaudeville
They'll give Harry Lauder the hook!
I couldn't get much of his prattle,
Although I tried pretty hard,
For the burr on his tongue was thicker
Than the cooties in my back-yard.
I slipped him a Pittsburg stogie,
The first one, I think, he had seen,
Then he joyfully smashed my fingers
Fading in a tobacco-smoke screen.
I know he's a worthy descendant
Of a hardy old sheep stealing line,
The kind that will charge the 'blazing gates'
If he hears the old bagpipes whine!
I hope I will meet him again, soon,
On this cuppy fair-green somewhere;
I've got a present to give him
That once nearly gassed me for fair!
It's that box of smokes Sis sent me—
I sure love to try and please—
Those black Porto Rico man killers

All spotted with skin disease.
He'll eat 'em! Oh, he's a blast furnace,
His forced draft is something to see;
A nicotine hound, that's what he is—
I've seen him smoke—take it from me!
Nice kid! I hope he gets home safe,
Though he's such a Goliath mark,
It would be as easy to snipe him
As the hippo in Central Park.
I've thought of his little 'mither'—
Their meeting! You get what I mean,
After four years talking her baby talk
In her dreams to her little wean
And planning the old plaid apron
Would make him a nice suit of clothes;—
No stepladder's needed in dreamland
To wipe her wee duckie doo's nose!"

LES BLESSÉS

From *The American Golfer*, December, 1917 (revised).

"WHEN you're ridin' your war-'obbies
Keep an eye out for a bloke
Oos been trimmed close to th' knee-joint,
Says 'e comes from Roanoke.
Strike me balmy 'es a cuckoo
An' perlite as any swell
But these 'Varginia' specimens
Are hobstinate as 'ell!

"If you'll 'old your gab I'll tell you
While we're munchin' of our chow
'Ow 'e smashed our bloomin' idols,
Me an' Pierre's, this is 'ow:
It 'appened when Pierre an' me
Just like two little boys
Wuz a-knockin' out th' sawdust
From each others bally toys.

" For me an' Pierre wuz wranglin',
Our wheel-chairs in a line
Where Marcel the nurse 'ad took us
For a dose o' French sunshine.
'Twuz in a swell toff's garden
Near th' Orspital Chatoo
Where they brought us lousy beggars
When th' Surgeon's job wuz through.

" My room-mate Pierre sat near me
An' 'es 'ard to understand
But 'e sputtered broken English
Wavin' of 'is only 'and.
Once more 'e wuz a-ravin'
Of Petain an' Joffer. Gawd!
'Til I squelched 'im good an' proper
With my 'Aig an' Byng an' Maude!

" We wuz at it 'ot 'an 'eavy
'E for 'is an' me for mine,—
One nipper Yorkshire Rifles
T'other, Batterie eighty-nine.
Jus' then we 'eard a gentle laugh
Which made us look around,—
There sat a Sammy near us
With 'is slouch-'at on the ground.

" A lanky, pale young blessy
With a shock o' tawny 'air
Showin' where th' shrapnel combed it,—
An' 'e'd left a leg somewhere.
'Is eyes, deep-set from fever
'Ad a grayish look o' steel
Yet they twinkled kind an' friendly,—
Sort o' comradeship appeal.

" 'E laughed, then lit a cigarette,
Louisey Ann perique
An' in'aled a couple lungfuls
As 'e started in to speak:
' I shore doan want to butt in
On yo' pow-wow, Gentlemen
But I've had a right-smart earful
Of yo' fighting supermen!

" ' I've been waiting, standing pat here
With a straight flush all the while
And as it's my bet, table stakes,
I think I'll bet my pile.
The fighting man *I* cheer for
Has U. S. A. on his grip;
His rough-necks are two-gun men
And they shoot from either hip.

" 'I was with him on the border
Where they drink their pulque neat
And he shore can use *my* carcass
When he wants to wipe his feet.
No offense, my fellow-cripples
But if I may be so bold
I reckon when God made Pershing
He just natchelly broke the mould!' "

SERGEANT BROWN

July 18th—After killing or capturing the crews of four machine guns and raking a Boche-filled trench with his automatic rifle, Sergeant J. F. Brown walked into American Headquarters late yesterday with 159 prisoners. "I am sorry, Sir, that I was unable to bring in all I had," he said in reporting, "but four of the wounded died on me."

A POOR excuse! we think you would
  Have gotten your just due
If you had suffocated when
  Those Heinies died on you.
If you had not been careless
  With your automatic gun
You could have goose-stepped to the rear
  With every cursed one!
Are you a spineless weakling
  And to discipline so slack
That you couldn't drive a flock o' Huns
  And tote four on your back?
How do *we* know there were four more?
  Your word's of no account,—

You should have lugged them in somehow,
To verify the count.
When the war is over, Sarge,
And back you finally come,
Don't say in telling your exploit
"I think that's going some!"
There's no extenuation
In that kind of specious bunk
E'en though you *are* round-shouldered
From wearing medal junk.
They'll give you all that's coming
To you in your home town,—
We mean the whole damvillage,
Serves you right too, Sergeant Brown.

NENETTE AND RINTINTIN

"YOUR letters are the jolliest
That reach this salient;
Cheerios to buck me up
When, feeling like a lonesome pup
I'm wondering if a hemlock-cup
Would not be heaven sent
For my nostalgic blues,—
Then come your billets-doux!

"I know their subtle fragrance,
That intangible perfume;
It is the hair, the hands, the eyes
In dreams I nightly visualize
Of one I'll always idolize,
Who dissipates my gloom
By writing funny stuff,—
Oh Mumsy, what a bluff!

"I know if I could see you
When you're writing to your son,
Your hands are ice, your heart is lead,
You know I'm wounded, gassed or dead,
Then headache takes you off to bed
The letter just begun;
    But first a little prayer
    For 'Juney' over there.

"Our men here wonder at the steel
That's in the gentler sex.
They've shown the world their women's
    might
With faces calm, serene and bright,
Heart-riven with the hellish blight,
This swirling flame-vortex
    That makes a shambles here
    Where loved ones disappear.

"But *I'm* safe; I wear amulets!
I'm bomb-proof now inside;
I smoke and sing on night patrol,
The parapet's my daily stroll;
Snipe on, you Boche! no bullet hole
Can ventilate my hide
    Thanks to wee maid and man,—
    Nenette and Rintintin!

"Henceforth back on my bayonet
Dead Huns I'll daily bring;
These worsted, good-luck Belgian twins
Protect the wearers' precious skins,
I cannot even bark my shins;
Oh death, where is thy sting?
Don't worry about me,—
I'm Harveyized, you see!"

BASTILLE DAY, JULY 14, 1918

Fifth Avenue and 40th Street, New York.

VIVE LA FRANCE!
SOLDATS ET MARINS
SOYEZ LES BIENVENUS
UN DINER DE POULET
AVEC LES COMPLIMENTS
DE LA MAISON

THIS chalked-up blackboard caught my eye
As I was slowly sauntering by;
I stopped to read and rest my legs
And thought I savored ham and eggs.
It was the witching "ham and" hour
In that gastronomic bower.
I peeked within, where waiter-girls
In Canteen caps and cutey curls

Were serving tables, rows on rows,—
Dear volunteering twinkletoes!
The blackboard proved it was not chance
That filled the room with boys from France
As they knew it was graft dîner
And gorged themselves with free poulet.
Two sailor lads who'd had their fill
Came out, first settling up their bill,—
U. S. Marines,—a husky pair
Who'd eaten through the bill-of-fare.
They stood and talked not far from me;
Note my short-hand proficiency.
Said Bill: "No, Mate, we got no bleats
Agin that line o' Canteen eats.
By Cripes! It made me lick my paw,
But I can't help a-feelin' sore
To see them Frenchies full o' beans
An' not a nickel in their jeans!
That Cop there, wised that Froggie bunch
An' pointed in to the free-lunch;
He pushed 'em to that blackboard there
An' then they beat it in for fair!
An' all because this is the day
When some ol' booby-hatch, they say,
Fell down out there in gay Paree
Which means we fill their faces free!
If *our* crew ever gets to France

We'll frisk one o' their resterants
And yell for 'em to fill our plates
With rooster-meat for all our mates
An' we won't cough a measly sou,—
Hell! Libby prison fell down too!"

WAR DOGS

In a deserted village sat
Our weary, war-worn bunch,
Near a shell-torn Château
Where we'd halted for our lunch.

Each one telling how he felt
In his first "zero" hour,—
All except the sphinx-like
Leatherneck we called "old sour."

He lay prone upon his back
Apart from all the rest,
Eyes in the clouds, his fingers locked
Across his massive chest.

He was a giant bearcat,
A gloomy, tongue-tied cuss
Who'd talk to birds and animals
But wouldn't talk to us.

He was an ugly fighter too,
The best I've ever met
For I've waded through the welter
From his murderous bayonet.

Well, as we smoked and chatted
We were suddenly aware
That a maimed, skulking, starving dog
Appeared from God knows where.

We called and coaxed and whistled
But he crouched, alert to run,
Mistrustful of a uniform,—
He'd met the treacherous Hun!

A sword-thrust had gashed his back,
One leg off at the knee,—
A merry jest of kultur
That's the way it looked to me.

Just then we heard "old sour"
Crooning softly to the pup,
It wasn't that we heard him speak
That made us all look up;

His gentle, sympathetic voice
Amazed us, I confess,
With its tender note of pity,—
Almost like a caress.

"Be friends, poor little blessé,
Oh, pas Anglais! I forget
That you don't speak the language
Of my dog in Joliet.

"So, viens ici pauvre p'tit chien,
Je suis ton bon ami,
Tu as très faim, j'en suis certain,
Bien, manges donc ici!

"Prends vite mon déjeuner,
Le voilà! poor old chap,—
Bless God your faith in man's restored
Here in your buddy's lap."

There was the dog up in his arms
His tail wig-wagging joy
While "old sour" fed the starveling,
Lunch meant for a doughboy.

"Get this!" said he turning 'round
"Here is man's truest friend,—
Faithful, trustful, loyal
And devoted to the end.

"You may be homeless, friendless,—
Not a red cent to your name
But your dog not being human
Will still love you just the same.

"No human being cared a hoot
When I left my home town
But I can see two agonized
Imploring eyes of brown.

"He's waiting at the Station *now*
For me to reappear
And they'll find him dead there, waiting,
If I go West from here!"

WHY WORRY?

Von Arnim, Von Quast and Von Buelow,
Von Marwitz, Von Huteir, Von Bohm;
Generals sent by the Kaiser
To bring all the bacon home
But McGinnis, McCabe and McSweeny,
McManus, McCann and McCall
Are there with the "fighting Sixty-ninth"
To give them the scraps,—that's all!

CŒUR DE LION

Darkest days of 1917

He licks his bleeding wounds as he lies
  The British Lion at bay!
A lurid gleam in his bloodshot eyes
The fighting spirit that never dies
In Albion's breed he typifies
  Ware of the coming day!
Deep in his throat an ominous roar
  Portent to Attila's crew
Ware the sweep of his mighty paw
Ware the crunch of his massive jaw
Giant ally in Liberty's war
  Dauntless, steadfast and true!

HOMEWARD BOUND

"It's daybreak Bill, let's tumble out,
We've had beaucoup of sleep,
This boat must be in sight of land
I think I'll take a peep.

"Oh boy! here's God's own country!
Oh, Glory be, just look
We're nosing up the channel, Bill,
We've just passed Sandy Hook.

"Good morrow Barren Island! Gee,
You look sweet as a rose
Although you used to lacerate
The Knickerbocker nose.

"And there's old Staten Island,
Panorama for sore eyes!
It's Home and Mother now, Bill,
Though hard to realize.

"Là-bas matey, is Hoboken,
Ding ding you am-bu-lance!
Come get your cootie-cootie
Little derelicts from France!

"Back there's dear old Manhattan
Where my best girl waits for me,—
I'm sidestepping all others
For that blonde affinity.

"She's the one I raved of
When I got my ether bun
For when you think you're croaking, Bill,
You'll find there's only one!"

"Hell's bells! you're always bragging
Of the girls who love you so!
You gave us all an earache
With that spiel at Bois Belleau.

"If *you* hadn't got me when
I crumpled on the wire
I'd feel like bashing in the face
That all your dames admire.

"You had your nerve too, when you brought
Me back to Thierry,—
You asked me who to notify
If things went bad for me

"And when I said I had a girl,
A real tip-topper here,
You muttered 'poor old pie-face Bill,
He's wandering, Doc, I fear!'

"You thought of course a map like mine
Made me a hopeless case;
You didn't give a Chinaman's chance
To my denatured face!

"But you thought wrong, you blighter
For you'll see her presently;
She's waiting at the same old spot
To keep her tryst with me.

"She doesn't mind my face at all,
Just sees my khaki kit,—
That's what won her affections
Starting out to do my bit.

"Look! there she is! my Bronze Girl!
On Bedloe's Isle you see,—
Je suis heureux de vous revoir,
C'est moi, BILL! ma chérie!"

WITH THE ALLIES

From *The American Golfer*, November, 1914.

Does latent love of powder smoke
Come from heredity?
If so, the family itch for war
Has recrudesced in me.

They say most of my forebears
Had a shoulder for a gun;
Some went with Scott to Mexico,
Some fought at Lexington.

At Waterloo they fought the French;
Time's whirligig finds me
In step with the "red trousers"
In bonne camaraderie.

My father was with Sherman
Where he heard the rebel yell;
He also heard his General say
He reckoned war is hell!

And judging from the shambles here
I think he was quite right,
Though he ne'er saw the bloodless death
From fumes of turpinite.

Yea! he was with the Sherman troops
When they marched to the sea,—
I guess his marching blood has made
A vagabond of me.

As a mere boy I disappeared
From "little old New York,"—
They brought me back from Frisco
For a serious family talk.

Then College, where perched on the mound
I spent my student days
To get the "stuff" upon the ball
For inshoot fadeaways.

Then I went on a ranch out West
To punch the maverick
But soon a restless fit came on,
I knew I couldn't stick.

From there to Catalina isle
For super-dreadnought fish,
Then back from Walla Walla, Wash.,
To Escanaba, Mich.

I've done a turn in vaudeville,
I've run a trolley car,
I've braked upon the B. & O.
And dug in Panama.

In Winnipeg I froze my feet;
Was sunstruck in Fort Wayne,—
Fell overboard and nearly drowned
Off Kennebunkport, Maine.

I joined a Kansas cyclone once,
A perfectly good blow—
It blew most of Topeka
Nearly over to Saint Jo.

It blew *me* a full brassie
And a mashie pitch or two
Until a stone wall stymied me,—
I couldn't quite get through.

I had to leave the highway
When I got to Muskogee,
That stone wall having left me
"Casual water" on the knee.

The "wanderlust" is just a lofty
Dilettante term
To indicate the presence
Of the common hobo germ.

When this great cataclysm broke
I was in Aberdeen;
I'd heard the ominous rumblings
Of a war that I'd foreseen.

I joined the troops at Liverpool
Whence my ancestors came,—
Some impulse I could not resist
Just pulled me in the game.

So here I am as foreordained,
A nomad ne'er-do-well
Who scribbles this while out of work
Due to a piece of shell.

Why not? Some Yankee poet
From his wallow in a trench
May get his V. C. from the hands
Of Kitchener or French!

One's not so brave to get shot up
Or blown to bits, or worse,
But it surely takes an iron nerve
To write my kind of verse;

Still, fair-haired Sergeant Temple says:
"It's ripping, dear old boy!"
Come roars of their approval
From MacTavish and Molloy;

Though Greek to my French comrades
They cry "Mondoo, c'est très bung!"
The rest of the world's critics
Can all go to, well,—get hung!

L'ENVOI

Hark! cries of many nations
With their backs against the wall!
Are you listening 'cross the ocean?
That's the English bugle call!
A cheer, then Tipperary,
In they go to jaws of hell,
A nation's flower gasping
Side by side there as they fell.
Are you murmuring my kinsmen
With responsive clutch at heart
At the fate which keeps the Anglo-Saxon
Brotherhood apart?
Shall the ages see the Stars and Stripes
With Union Jack unflung,
A life and death alliance
Among those who speak our tongue?
Would polyglots acclaim it as
World Strife forever hushed,
A covenant that monstrous
Militarism is crushed?

Your silent men are thinking
Through their stern neutrality;
Are they pondering the empty phrase
Of "hands across the sea"?
In dreamland were they marching
With the British lads who fell
In fighting for "a scrap of paper"?
History will tell!

SOMEWHERE

MacLaren of the Seaforths!
A visage leonine;
Drum-fire spit of machine guns,
A decimated line.

MacLaren of the Seaforths!
The sands are running low;
Forebodings of a stricken lass
Where bonnie blue-bells blow.

MacLaren of the Seaforths!
With premonition true,
Your trenchmates gone of yester-eve
Are beckoning to you.

MacLaren of the Seaforths!
Objective just ahead;
The flame-blighted shell-scarred knoll
Its slopes o'erstrewn with dead.

MacLaren of the Seaforths!
Patter of leaden rain;
A choking gasp, a crumpled form,
A quick surcease from pain.

MacLaren of the Seaforths!
A body stiff and stark
Where man's death-dealing messenger
Had found its giant mark.

A chaplain's requiescat,
A grave in foreign mold
Neath poppy blooms nid-nodding,—
The story's oft been told.

Somewhere in war's grim record,
Just one more valiant part;
Somewhere in the bleak Highlands,
Just one more broken heart.

MY PAL FRANÇOIS

Artilleur, Douzième Batterie

"Eez eet good-bye zen, aujourd'hui?
You leave wiz your artillerie
For go back to Ětats Unis!
Sacré nom! il est bien loin d'ici.

"My heart eez sad; so now shak' han's
Here by my ol' soixante-quinze;
Cessez le feu! have spoil our plans
For mak' ragoût of allemands.

"Long time we boce have serve ze guns
For send ze foodstuff to ze Huns;
C'est vrai we feed zem tons an' tons
Franco-Américain lyddite buns.

"Eet was my life! I am like you,
We now have nozzing left to do,
Ze flaming orchestra eez through,—
C'est dommage, il n'y en a plus.

"I wanted tak' you à Paris
For one,—qu' est-ce que c'est,—beeg spree!
Ce n'était pas ma faute you see,—
Comprenez-vous ce que je dis?

"I have ze horreur of zis day
When you tell me you gone away.
Eet eez adieu! oui, je le sais,
J'en suis extrêmement fâché.

"I would not leave you, au contraire,
Eef we been fightin' overzaire,—
I send for my charmante sistaire
For keep ze house, après la guerre.

"Who say, fren'ship like you an' me
C'est passé ou il est fini!
Some day bien sûr your eyes weel see
Moi, François! vraiment je vous suis.

"I have resolve de tout mon cœur
J'irai avec ma jolie sœur;
I tak' my sistaire parce que
Mebbee you fall in love wiz her.

"Zen peut être, my dream come true
Zat my sweet Jeanne she marry you,
Zen when night come an' work eez through
I have ze chair an' pipe chez-vous!"

THE SMOKED YANKEES

"YASSIR! I got dose wound-stripes
In foreign jography
With the Three Hundred Sixty-ninth
Ol' Fifteenth Infantry.

"I got my honor'ble discharge
Account o' my right wing;
Dat hand was blown clean off de map
With my gold token-ring.

"Jus' came back on de *Celtic*, Boss,
An' now our Tenderloin—
Meanin' ol' Sixth Avenoo—
Will soon eat up my coin.

"Den back to my ol' job again,
A hash house, servin' eats,—
Dat busts my army pride to go
Back yellin' 'brown de wheats!'

"An' once yo' snuff dat mustard
From de gas dat skins yo' raw
Yo' can't smear no ham sandwiches
With dat compound no mo'

"An' with no C. O. near me
An' a cleaver 'round somewhere
One order for a Hamburg steak
Might send *me* to th' chair!

"I guess I'll try to get a job
At some Fifth Avenoo shop
To wear a gold-lace uniform,—
A limousine bell-hop,

"Den some day Colonel Hayward
Maybe come a-strollin' by
An' my left-hand salute will catch
His military eye.

"Maybe he'll stop, stretch out his hand
An' say, 'Boy, put it there!
Yo're one o' my Smoked Yankees,
I can tell 'em anywhere!

"'I hate to see yo' dolled up
In a Admiral's uniform
But presume yo' needs th' money
Fo' po'k chops an' somethin' warm.

"'O I place yo' now,—Mose Washington,
Corporal, Company B,—
I pinned dat medal on yo'
Fo' dat intrepidity!

"'Yo' black hide's perforated
Like a ol' tin pepper-box
Fo' yo're de gluttonest coon dat ever
Stood in army socks!

"'Shrapnel, bayonet, trench-grenades
An' sprayed with liquid fire,—
Yo' got mo' lives dan a black cat,
Yo' have, or I'm a liar!

"'No white man in de army, Mose,
Has fought mo' gallantly;
I never had a braver nigger
Fightin' under me!'

. . . . .

"Den Boss, my cup o' pipe-dreams
Will be full up to de brim;
He's my ol' Colonel, fo' two bits
I'd go to hell fo' him!"

"SMILES"

At Twenty-seventh Headquarters
A goggled youth dubbed "Smiles"
Had streaked a motorcycle
Over leagues of lumpy miles

Doing dispatch-riding
Back and forth for the C Os,
Not a soporific job
As every soldier knows.

Sunlight, moonlight, rain or shine
They'd see him whizzing by
Dodging shells and taking all
Pup-craters on the fly.

He brought along his cheery smile
So all the doughboys say,
From Spartanburg, where he picked up
His fitting sobriquet.

He'd picked up almost everything
They pick up in a trench
From live-stock to a knowledge
Of extraordinary French

Which on occasions he would air
(The French) quite willingly
To puzzle the long-suffering
Gallic peasantry.

With good-humored complaisance
He'd embrace the frequent chance
To show the friendly poilus
He was quite at home in France.

One night, one of his Company
Brought "Smiles" a fountain-pen
And said, "Corp, you always write
The love notes for us men.

"I just got this here postcard,—
I think it's from my best,—
See, here she signs it 'Fifi,'
That's the peach I met in Brest.

"Naw! I can't read the damn thing,
Please de-code the stuff for me
And cop out a swell answer
Like a hunk o' poetry.

"You're hell on French an' I don't know
A word except 'bébé!'
It's gotta be in French or she
Won't get a word I say.

"Just hand her gobs o' Hoola stuff,—
Tobasco Coochie Coo,—
An' I'll go polish an' oil up
Your motor-bike for you."

Now "Smiles" had missed tobacco
And had evidence to show
That Smith was quite light-fingered,—
Now for a *quid pro quo*.

So this is what the mail bag took
Next morning back to Brest
From a near-Academician
At Private Smith's request:

"Je suis surpris de recevoir
Une chaud poste cart de vous.
Vous-avez beaucoup de la nerve!
Ne plus, Fifi, ne plus!

"Vous etes extrémement méchante,
Je vous passez ze mitt;
Sacrebleu! sans introduction
Vouz-avez moi ecrit!

"Où avez-vous fait mon
Connaisance, Fifi dear?
Je ne puis pas remember
Any Fifis! C'est à rire!

"Vous-avez cinquinte ans n'est pas?
Oui Fifi, je le sais;
J'aime toujours la dix-sept ans,—
Adieu donc! C'est assez!

"N'essayez pas de vamp me,
Je n'ai pas any wad;
Vous avez faim seulment pour coin,—
Vous me rendez malade!"

Fifi's answer was *one* word
And hence, exceeding terse
But "Smiles" explained to Private Smith
It meant she loved his verse

And also that she loved *him:*
Now he could carry on,—
He had her shy avowal
In the magic word "Cochon!"

But later Private Smith said "Corp,
I know what that word means,
You're a *helluva* French scholar!
You sure have spilled the beans!

"To scare the chickens seems to be
A motorcyclist's joke
But,—I'll call it square, old kill-joy
If you've got somethin' to smoke!"

ARE WE DOWNHEARTED?

"WHERE do we go from here, boys?
Was the song we sang over in France
When we'd mopped them up with the bayonet
And keen for a further advance.

"Where do we go from here, boys
Now we're back home from overseas?
Do we brigade with the 'submerged tenth'
When we're out at elbows and knees?

"Where do we go from here, boys
And where does the trail now lead?
Back to the echoing slough of despond,—
'We've got all the hands we need!'

"Where do we go from here, boys
Now that housework is getting passé
And the new girl-man is elbowing us
Into the cold consommé?

"Where do we go from here, boys?
We might get a maid's job, we might,
Dusting and sweeping and purling betimes
And putting the cat out at night.

"I'm damned if I know where to go, boys,
To bring home some kale for my shack;
It looks like a bench in the park, boys
For thousands of us who came back.

"I knew dead sure where I'd go, boys,—
Straight West in a spatter of blood,—
If the shell that dropped in my dugout
Hadn't turned out to be a dud

"But if this is what I came home for,
The bread-line up there on Broadway,
I'm sorry that dud wasn't functioning
When it paid me a visit that day."

THE GAP IN THE LINE

We saw her there in the cheering throng,
A frail little Mother, careworn and gray,
When our young veterans marched along
Under the Victory Arch that day.
Ashes of hope in her burnt-out eyes,
Lips supplicating in fervent prayer,
Invoking someone in spectral guise
To march with the living heroes there.
Look! little Mother, the wraith-like come!
Who beckons there from the Spirit row
On noiseless feet to the beat of the drum?
Your little nursling of long ago!
Shoulder to shoulder with ghostly tread,—
Vapor-like passing of phantom ships,—
Hark! "Mother mine, we are the dead!"
A smile for her on his pallid lips.
Sayest thou He would not beatify
This swooning Mother,—inanimate clod?
Sceptics, know *ye* the wherefore and why
Of the inscrutable acts of God?

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